

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
October 18, 2012

EXPLORATORIUM BAY OBSERVATORY AND PROMENADE EXHIBITS

Project No. 12-044-01
Project Manager: Deborah Hirst

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$250,000 to the Exploratorium to construct and install exhibits for the Bay Observatory and Public Promenade at the new Exploratorium location on Piers 15/17, to plan future exhibits for these spaces and to sponsor a series of Bay-focused workshops at the Exploratorium.

LOCATION: City and County of San Francisco

PROGRAM CATEGORY: San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [The New Exploratorium Location Maps](#)
 - Exhibit 2: [Site Photographs and Renderings of the New Exploratorium](#)
 - Exhibit 3: [Bay Observatory and Public Promenade Exhibits](#)
 - Exhibit 4: [The Exploratorium Relocation Project NOD and FEIR](#)
(viewable at <http://www.sf-index.aspx?page=1828>)
 - Exhibit 5: [Project Letters](#)
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RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31160-65 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes disbursement of up to \$250,000 to the Exploratorium to construct and install exhibits for the Bay Observatory and Public Promenade at the new Exploratorium location on Piers 15/17, to plan future exhibits for these spaces and to sponsor a series of Bay-focused workshops at the Exploratorium in the City and County of San Francisco, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the disbursement of funds, the Exploratorium shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy:
 - a. A final work program, schedule and budget.

- b. The scopes of work and the roster of contractors to be employed in the project.
 - c. A sign plan acknowledging the Conservancy and displaying its logo in a manner approved by the Executive Officer.
2. Prior to initiating construction, the Exploratorium shall provide written evidence to the Conservancy's Executive Officer that all permits and approvals necessary to the implementation and completion of the project under applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations have been obtained.
3. The Exploratorium and the landowner shall enter into an agreement sufficient to protect the public interest in the project pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 31116(c)."

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

"Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program, Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Sections 31160-31165.
3. As a responsible agency, the Conservancy has independently reviewed and considered the information contained in the City of San Francisco's Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), attached to the accompanying staff recommendation as Exhibit 4, and finds that there is no substantial evidence that the Conservancy's proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment.
4. The Exploratorium is a nonprofit organization existing under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and whose purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code."

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends authorization to disburse up to \$250,000 to the Exploratorium to construct and install San Francisco Bay-related interactive, interpretive exhibits for the Bay Observatory and the Public Promenade at the new Exploratorium location on Piers 15/17, to plan future exhibits for these spaces and to sponsor a series of Bay-focused workshops at the Exploratorium in the City and County of San Francisco.

The proposed project will help complete indoor and outdoor exhibits, plan and implement new exhibits, and develop a program that will include Bay science and projects supported by the Conservancy at the new Exploratorium location on the San Francisco waterfront (Exhibit 1). The Exploratorium is a science education museum that has been operating in San Francisco for more than four decades. In 2013, the Exploratorium will be relocating to Piers 15/17 from their current location at the Palace of Fine Arts. A \$300 million capital campaign is allowing the Exploratorium to renovate and retrofit the historic Pier 15, open up a new waterfront access between Piers 15 and 17, and bring more than 1.5 acres of public access space into use around

the new museum including the Public Promenade and a new improvement for the San Francisco Bay Trail (Exhibit 2). Piers 15/17 are owned by the Port of San Francisco, which approved the relocation of the Exploratorium in 2009. The Exploratorium's inquiry-based experience method of engaging people in exploring science will be applied to the natural world and environmental science with a large focus on San Francisco Bay. An estimated five million waterfront pedestrians and one million museum visitors will enjoy the public space, outdoor exhibits and San Francisco Bay Trail at Piers 15/17 annually.

The proposed project has three components, the first being construction of a variety of "hands-on" interactive exhibits that focus on interpretation of science and the environment of the new Exploratorium's bay-front location at Piers 15/17 (Exhibit 3). The new exhibits will be located in the Bay Observatory, a 6,000 square foot, glass walled exhibition space with 360 degree views around the San Francisco Bay and the city itself, and on the Public Promenade, the new 1.5-acre public access area surrounding the museum. The Public Promenade and portions of the Bay Observatory will be available for free public access. Specific exhibits for the Bay Observatory that may be constructed through the proposed project include: a Bay Model exhibit onto which data can be projected such as salinity levels, fog simulation, loss of and restoration of wetland area, and climate change modeling data; a Tasting the Tide exhibit which will provide drinking fountains with levels of salinity that correspond to the location on a floor-size San Francisco Bay map of each drinking fountain (the salinity levels will be tied to salinity mapping data described in the Bay Observatory); a Bay Voices exhibit that will provide video vignettes of a wide range of professionals and people who work along the waterfront and present the sounds in a space and manner to create both complimentary and contradictory views of the Bay; and a How I Love the Bay exhibit consisting of video and/or sound clips presented in an installation that allows a complex profile of the Bay to emerge from the stories of those whose lives are shaped by the Bay.

Exhibits to be constructed on the Public Promenade through this project may include: a Bay Windows exhibit in which visitors spin large disks filled with samples of Bay mud, sand, gravel and water to reveal different settling rates, changing colors and patterns from five distinct regions of the Bay; a Disappearing Rings exhibit in which six-foot wide, white rings are lowered into the water to show Bay turbidity as the rings disappear; the Color of Water exhibit provides a visual guide to match the color of the Bay with variations in color resulting from variation in such factors as sediment levels and phytoplankton occurring at the time of observation. A color matching chart will be mounted on the railing to allow visitors to estimate the Bay's changing color; and a Flow Fields exhibit in which a large scale installation of bay tidal direction markers allow visitors to see how the bay flows along the waterfront according to tides, bay bathymetry and estuarine carved channels.

Exploratorium staff will also construct, with support from the Conservancy, a unique multi-media Bay History Walk "interactive wall" of history about the Bay, the Pier, and the museum as an improvement for the San Francisco Bay Trail. An approximately .33-mile segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail will run along the new location for the Exploratorium and the Bay History feature. The proposed project will help support the development of content for the Bay History Walk as well as the exhibit's construction in the bulkhead of the renovated pier. The 51-foot long feature will be located in the front of the new building in a grand lobby between the new theatre,

the museum entrance and the public space of the pier. The exhibit will including a time-lapse film showing the development of the waterfront, a view-finder to look into for historical photographs, historical map panels that slide up and down to show changes in the edge of the waterfront over time, and other means of conveying bay related history from the 1800's to the present.

A number of additional exhibits will be developed over the course of the project as the second project component. Exhibit concepts to be developed will include the use of "Settling Plates" that show the "fouling" that organisms in the bay cause by colonizing these research plates over time due to seasonality and other environmental factors, Observatory ideas and environmental data collected on site at the museum, and work of artists documenting phenomenon in the bay such as fog, sound or marine life. The Exploratorium creates original exhibits in-house and many Exploratorium exhibit concepts and designs have been sold for use in more than 1,000 museums around the world. Exhibits developed through the proposed project may also result in use outside the Exploratorium. This serves to disseminate information and ideas to a broad audience through other organizations, institutions and public agencies for use in public spaces, nature centers and other visitor-serving places. Any potential revenue generated by sale of exhibits developed with Conservancy funding would be reinvested in the care and maintenance of the exhibits funded by the Conservancy for the new Exploratorium. The Exploratorium estimates an exhibit's life is approximately 5 – 10 years of daily use by thousands of individuals. Outdoor exhibits are built to withstand the natural elements. The museum's Exhibit Environment group, comprised of more than 80 staff people, maintains and refurbishes the Exploratorium's collection of approximately 1,000 exhibits.

The third component of the project will be The Observatory Conversation series, an educational workshop series to be held at the Exploratorium's new Bay Observatory that will bring together experts from science, exhibit design, art and other fields to generate discussion on specific topics at the new museum. Project partners at the Exploratorium anticipate the Observatory Conversation series will help the development of concepts for future exhibits and provide an opportunity for the Conservancy to share science and environmental projects to be highlighted in new Exploratorium exhibits. Specifically, the program will invite professionals from different fields to present their work, engage with each other and the audience in a participatory conversation in the Bay Observatory, using the exhibit environment as a tool for the exchange of ideas. Professionals from such fields as environmental science, geography, local history, policy and urban design will be invited to explore ideas with each other and the public in a series of four or more events over two years. Topics for the program series will include science of the bay, new exhibit development, and collaboration on how to translate new environmental data into meaningful experiences for the public. The goal of the program and the Exploratorium exhibits is to provide the public with tools and experiences that deepen understanding of and interest in the San Francisco Bay and natural environment.

In summary, the proposed project will support the New Exploratorium objectives to: 1) implement exhibits on the Public Promenade and in the Bay Observatory free spaces that engage public audiences in noticing and observing; 2) connect exhibit experiences with scientific phenomena and research data (historic and new) that demonstrate the San Francisco Bay's dynamic environment; and 3) create a public forum through the conversation series by bringing together professionals from a variety of fields and the museum audience to explore the

landscape, to build community around the ideas and exhibits in the Observatory, and to allow for the conversation to inform and shape future exhibits and programs in the Observatory.

The Exploratorium's mission is to create a culture of learning through innovative exhibits, environments, programs and tools that stimulate curiosity and enable people of all ages and origins to explore the world around them. The Conservancy previously granted funds to the Exploratorium to complete public access improvements for the wave organ located on the waterfront adjacent to the Golden Gate Yacht Club in 2008. Conservancy staff is confident that the Exploratorium will successfully complete the project as planned in a timely manner as it has secured multiple funders for the overall museum relocation and new facilities development at Pier 15/17, it has completed a prior improvement project with Conservancy funds and it has prioritized improving public access to the Bay waterfront adjacent to the new museum location.

Site Description: The new Exploratorium is located on the downtown waterfront at the historic Piers 15/17 halfway between the Ferry Building and Fisherman's Wharf in the City and County of San Francisco. The new Exploratorium will be located immediately adjacent to the San Francisco Bay Trail along the Embarcadero, which is heavily traveled by pedestrians and bicycles and is easily accessible by BART, buses, and streetcars. Piers 15/17 are contributing resources to the San Francisco Embarcadero National Register Historic District.

Project History: In 2008, the Conservancy provided funding to the Exploratorium to complete public access improvements to the wave organ, including improving access for people with disabilities. The wave organ is located on the waterfront adjacent to the Golden Gate Yacht Club. The proposed project is a component of a larger relocation of the Exploratorium to the refurbished Piers 15/17 location, which is being made possible by a \$300 million capital campaign. The Exploratorium signed a 66-year lease with the Port of San Francisco for use of the piers, received a permit from the Bay Conservation and Development Commission in 2009, and began development of the new museum space in 2010. The Exploratorium will relocate from the Palace of Fine Arts to Pier 15 in January 2013. There is the potential for expansion to the Pier 17 portion of the site in future years. Concepts for new interactive exhibits and public access at Pier 15 have been under development as a part of the relocation plan and discussions with Conservancy staff led to the proposed project.

The new Exploratorium at Piers 15/17 has broad support including elected officials such as San Francisco Mayor Lee, Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and such institutions as San Francisco Planning and Urban Research (SPUR), Architectural Heritage of San Francisco, and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce (Exhibit 5). The project will benefit the San Francisco waterfront and provide a landmark visitor destination for residents and tourists, easily accessible by public transportation in downtown San Francisco.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$250,000
The Exploratorium	<u>\$305,394</u>
Total Project Costs	\$555,394

The anticipated sources of Conservancy funds for this grant are the fiscal year 2008/09

appropriation to the Conservancy from Proposition 84, i.e., the “Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006,” Public Resources Code § 75001 et seq. and the fiscal year 2009/10 appropriation to the Conservancy from the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account (Vehicle Code § 5067) of the California Environmental License Plate Fund.

Proposition 84 allocates funds to the Conservancy’s San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program for purposes of: “protection of beaches, bays and coastal waters and watersheds, including . . . projects and expenditures to promote access to and enjoyment of coastal resources of the state” Public Resources Code §§ 75060 & 75060(c). The definition of the term “protection” in Proposition 84 includes: “those actions necessary to allow the continued use and enjoyment of property or natural resources and includes acquisition, development, restoration, preservation and interpretation.” Public Resources Code § 75005(m). Proposition 84 defines the term “interpretation” as including: “a visitor serving amenity that educates and communicates the significance and value of natural, historical, and cultural resources in a way that increases the understanding and enjoyment of these resources and that may utilize the expertise of a naturalist or other specialist skilled at educational interpretation.” Public Resources Code § 75005(i).

The proposed project will be undertaken pursuant to the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program (Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code), as described below, and will protect the San Francisco Bay through interpretation, i.e., by providing interactive, Bay-oriented, exhibits that will educate and communicate the significance and value of the resources of the Bay in a way that increases the understanding and enjoyment of the Bay. The exhibits will be located on the San Francisco waterfront along a segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail. Thus, the exhibits will also promote public access to and enjoyment of the Bay.

Funds from the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account of the California Environmental License Plate Fund may be used for all projects that are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code. These funds will be designated for the series of Bay-focused workshops at the new Exploratorium.

Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 provides that the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program give priority to projects with matching funds (Public Resources Code §31163(c)). The Exploratorium has raised very significant levels of private matching funds and expects to contribute more than \$300,000 to complete the proposed project.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code Sections 31160 et seq. regarding San Francisco Bay projects.

The proposed project is located in the City and County of San Francisco, which is within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, consistent with Section 31162.

Pursuant to Section 31162(a), the Conservancy may award grants that will “improve public access to and around the bay, coast, ridge tops, and urban open spaces . . . through completion . . . of regional bay, coast, and ridge trail systems. . . and through the provision and preservation of related

facilities, such as interpretive centers, picnic areas, staging areas, and campgrounds.” Consistent with Section 31162(a), the proposed project will improve public access by completing a new improvement for a .33 mile segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail, and by providing a public access-related facility in the form of interactive, interpretive Bay-focused exhibits at 1.5 acres of public open space on the waterfront within San Francisco, one of the nine Bay Area counties.

Pursuant to Section 31162(d), the Conservancy may grant awards that will “promote, assist, and enhance projects that provide open space and natural areas that are accessible to urban populations for recreational and educational purposes.” Consistent with Section 31162(d), the proposed project will enhance 1.5 acres of public space on the San Francisco waterfront by constructing Bay-focused, science education exhibits for the public and planning related future exhibits.

Section 31165 authorizes the Conservancy to award grants for activities that facilitate environmental education related to ocean, coastal, bay or watershed resources. These activities may include exhibits or events emphasizing coastal, watershed, or ocean resources education. The third component of the proposed project will provide a series of educational workshops relating to the resources of San Francisco Bay. These activities will deepen the public’s understanding of and interest in the Bay. Thus, the third component of the proposed project is consistent with Section 31165.

Section 31163(a) states that the Conservancy shall “cooperate with cities, counties, and districts, the bay commission, other regional governmental bodies, nonprofit land trusts, nonprofit landowner organizations, and other interested parties in identifying and adopting long-term resource and outdoor recreational goals for the San Francisco Bay Area, which shall guide the ongoing activities of the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program.” Consistent with Section 31163(a), the proposed project will complete improvements for public access on the San Francisco Bay waterfront and for the San Francisco Bay Trail, goals identified in The Association of Bay Area Governments *The Bay Trail Plan*, 2) the San Francisco General Plan, and 3) the Port of San Francisco *Waterfront Land Use Plan*.

The proposed project satisfies all of the criteria for determining project priorities under Section 31163(c) in that:

- 1) The project is consistent with approved plans including: The Bay Conservation and Development Commission *San Francisco Bay Plan (amended October 2011)*; The Association of Bay Area Governments *The Bay Trail Plan*; the San Francisco General Plan, and the Port of San Francisco *Waterfront Land Use Plan*;
- 2) The project serves a regional constituency by helping to enhance 1.5-acres of public space on the San Francisco waterfront and an improvement for the San Francisco Bay Trail;
- 3) The project can be implemented in a timely way as the Exploratorium is prepared to begin work upon project approval;
- 4) The improvement of public access to San Francisco Bay and the San Francisco Bay Trail along the Embarcadero at the new Exploratorium location provides an opportunity for benefits that could be lost if recreational uses of the property was developed without Conservancy funding; and
- 5) The project includes significant matching funds from the Exploratorium.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S 2007
STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):**

Consistent with **Goal 11, Objective A** of the Conservancy's 2007 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will support a plan for future improvements for an educational center.

Consistent with **Goal 11, Objective B** of the Conservancy's 2007 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will provide improvements for an educational center.

Consistent with **Goal 11, Objective E**, the proposed project will enhance a portion of the San Francisco Bay Trail.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S
PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:**

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on November 10, 2011, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
3. **Support of the public:** The proposed project enjoys wide support from the public and elected officials including the San Francisco Mayor Lee. Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and organizations including San Francisco Planning and Urban Research (SPUR), Architectural Heritage of San Francisco, and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. Please see letters of support in Exhibit 5.
4. **Location:** The proposed project would be located on the San Francisco Bay at Piers 15/17 along the waterfront, a fifteen-minute walk from the Ferry Building and the BART Embarcadero Station in the City and County of San Francisco.
5. **Need:** With the anticipated opening of the new Exploratorium in Spring 2013, the timing necessary to fund new exhibits, begin the workshop series and plan future exhibits is short and without Conservancy funding the Exploratorium would be unable to complete the proposed project.
6. **Greater-than-local interest:** The Exploratorium is a world-class institution that will draw local, state, national and international visitors to its new bay-front location. Annual visits are anticipated by 1 million people attending the museum and 5 million pedestrians using the 1.5 acres of free public space to be open at Piers 15/17, a stop along the San Francisco Bay Trail.

7. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The proposed project will take place at the new Exploratorium on Piers 15/17. *The Exploratorium Relocation Project Final Environmental Impact Report* (EIR) analyzed the vulnerability of the new Exploratorium to sea level rise. The EIR stated that recent climate change models have predicted a sea level rise of 28 inches by 2100 under a worst-case climate change scenario (EIR at III.I-33). There is currently an elevation difference of 33 to 36 inches between the Total Water Level and the top surface of Piers 15/17. Therefore, if mean sea level rises to the worst-case scenario by 2100, the Pier decks would still be above the Total Water Level by about approximately 6 inches.

Additional Criteria

8. **Urgency:** The proposed project is part of a larger effort to refurbish and retrofit the declining Piers 15/17 on the urban waterfront in downtown San Francisco. To meet the larger project deadlines and move forward with the relocation of the Exploratorium from its current location at the Palace of Fine Arts to Piers 15/17, the Public Promenade and Bay Observatory exhibits must be completed by Spring 2013.
9. **Resolution of more than one issue:** The proposed project will provide the public with enhanced access to the Bay and a segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail on the Exploratorium's Public Promenade, while also providing the public with educational experiences that will improve public awareness and understanding of the Bay's resources.
10. **Leverage:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
11. **Innovation:** By developing and constructing exhibits to support the reuse of a historic waterfront pier as the new location for a highly successful science museum, the proposed project supports a truly innovative educational opportunity for the public to experience the San Francisco Bay, shoreline development history, environmental science of the bay, technology, art and the use of public space for the exploration of science and perception.
12. **Readiness:** The Exploratorium is ready to construct the proposed exhibits, and begin the workshop series and future exhibit designs upon approval of the proposed project.
13. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** See "Project History" above."
14. **Cooperation:** The proposed project involves a tremendous amount of cooperation and collaboration between scientists, artists, nonprofit organizations, research institutions and the public in exhibit development for the Exploratorium. The project represents another step in the development of the relationship between the Exploratorium and promotion of science and projects supported by the Conservancy.
15. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:** The new Exploratorium at Piers 15/17 has several design features to help keep the building's green house gas emissions to a minimum. These design features include photovoltaic panels, a bay water heating and cooling system, rain water collection cisterns, a gray water systems, low flow fixtures in the restrooms, and special window treatments to help control temperature fluctuations. The current plans call for an application for LEED gold certification. In addition, the new Exploratorium location is adjacent to major transportation options including BART, buses, streetcars, bicycle lanes and pedestrian access along the Embarcadero.

CONSISTENCY WITH SAN FRANCISCO BAY PLAN:

The proposed project is consistent with the applicable policies contained in Part IV, Development of the Bay and Shoreline: Findings and Policies, of the San Francisco Bay Plan adopted by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) (as amended October 6, 2011).

Public Access Policy No. 8 states: Access to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails or other appropriate means and connect to the nearest public thoroughfare where convenient parking or public transportation may be available. Diverse and interesting public access experiences should be provided which would encourage users to remain in the designated access areas to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects on wildlife and their habitat. Consistent with Public Access Policy No. 8, the proposed project will provide exhibits in a public access area on the waterfront that connects to a public thoroughfare where convenient public transportation is available (the Embarcadero), and will provide a diverse and interesting public access experience (including the Bay History Walk at the new location of the Exploratorium at Piers 15/17) that will encourage users to remain in designated public access areas.

Appearance, Design and Scenic Views Policy No. 2 states in relevant part that “[a]ll bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay” and “[m]aximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas...”. Consistent with this policy, the proposed project will enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay by providing interactive, interpretive exhibits in the public space around Piers 15/17.

Finally, Recreation Policy No. 3 states that recreational facilities should be encouraged by BCDC if they are located, improved and managed such that they (1) are concentrated as close to major population centers as is feasible, (2) do not preempt land or water area needed for other priority uses, (3) are feasible from an engineering standpoint and (4) are consistent with public access policies that address wildlife compatibility and disturbance. The proposed project constitutes an upgrade to a recreational facility that is close to a major population center (the City and County of San Francisco), does not preempt land or water area needed for other priority uses, is feasible from an engineering standpoint, and does not disturb wildlife. The proposed project is thus encouraged by BCDC per Recreation Policy No. 3.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed project is a component of a much larger project, which is the relocation of the Exploratorium to Piers 15/17. As the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City of San Francisco Planning Department (City) certified *The Exploratorium Relocation Project Final Environmental Impact Report* (EIR) on July 9, 2009, (Exhibit 4) and approved The Exploratorium Relocation Project on September 11, 2009. The City also adopted a

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).

The EIR identified potentially significant environmental effects of the relocation project in four areas: 1) cultural resources, 2) noise, 3) air quality, and 4) biological resources. The EIR also identified mitigation measures that will mitigate all identified significant impacts to less-than-significant levels. None of these potentially significant environmental effects result from construction and installation of the exhibits or the workshop series that are proposed to be funded by the Conservancy. Thus, the potential effects of the proposed project are not considered significant. Accordingly, Conservancy staff has concluded that the proposed project will not have significant environmental effects. Therefore, staff recommends that the Conservancy find that there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment.

Staff will file a Notice of Determination upon the Conservancy's approval of the project.